

R1 CAC Meeting
January 20, 2016
Public Meeting Room

Public Present: Paul Cook, Trig Cook, Jim Vashro, Paul Martin, Lynn Epps

CAC Present: Jay Sheffield, Ron Hawkinson, Charles Abell, Dan Short, Mike Rooney, Joe Rudolph (new), Colter Comstock (new), Mike Robertson, Larry Lack, and Kari Gabriel

FWP Present: John Fraley, Neil Anderson, Mark Deleray, Lee Anderson, Dave Landstrom, and Martha Abbrescia

Jim Williams is absent this evening as he has been in meetings the last two days in Helena.

Kari Gabriel brought a falcon and shared an informational presentation with the group.

Neil Anderson gave update on the initial big horn sheep sub-committee meeting. The first meeting involved two CAC members, but several more members volunteered to help (Sheffield, Gabriel).

Neil covers the regulation proposal meeting that took place on 1/09/2016. Explains the process for implementation if approved by F&W Commission. Neil further explains and answers questions regarding shoulder seasons. The actual comments from the public meeting are currently being compiled.

Dave Landstrom / Montana State Parks Presentation:

There are 14 State Parks that we manage in Region One. Some of them are on state land that we lease from DNRC. Big Arm State Park is in this category and we recently renegotiated the lease to try to give us 4 more years to figure out how FWP can keep it as a state park.

Flathead Lake - Big Arm State Park

LEASE from DNRC

2016 - \$15,561

2017 - \$16,184

2018 - \$18,831

2019 - \$17,504

The State Park system got its own Parks Board in 2013, so that many of the complex State Parks issues could receive their own concentrated attention and effort. The State Parks system is important to MT residents and receives 80% resident use. The Governor appointed the Parks Board members in much the same way as he appointed the F&W Commission.

Some other issues we're dealing with are:

- Commercial Use of State Parks is trending up. There is a new commercial use fee rule. The new one is compressed and easier to read. In some cases, the prices have gone up.
- \$16M infrastructure and maintenance backlog. The budget for the MT State Parks is relatively weak in comparison to surrounding states.
- MT State Parks Strategic Plan is to improve the parks systems financial stability.
- Prioritize and classify based on significant - historic, cultural, scientific, and recreational legacy. The way we market & promote state parks will also change.
- Lincoln County - Logan State Park will have mooring and electricity is being added in most places.
- Sanders County - Thompson Falls State Park is getting a pond expansion

- Lake County - Finley Point is getting a total facelift with more RV camping, tent camping, and a couple of rental cabins. Some of the Flathead Lake Park sites will only be available to those traveling by bike or kayak.

ROUND TABLE:

Jay Sheffield: Last night the regulation meeting was held in Libby with Neil Anderson & Tonya Chilton. Paul Martin voices concern about hunting cow elk in the early season.

Ron Hawkinson: Echoes what Jay says about the early Archery season. There is a lot of concern from bow hunters. I volunteered to be on the sheep sub-committee...would like to see some more folks get on this committee.

Charles Abell: Thanks for the article on Invasive Species. We still need to let the public know that funds (rewards) are available to the folks that turn in people who are doing this. There is a feeling of concern about the possible lack of public access due to Plum Creek selling to Weyerhaeuser. Everyone is waiting to see. Seeing lots of turkeys north of the tracks in Whitefish area, seeing few moose this year.

Dan Short: References the joint editorial by the "Good Guys"...he personally appreciates the cooperative spirit and was delighted to see it in the Daily Interlake! Wanted to shake Jim Williams hand for signing that!

Mike Rooney: I've been seeing a lot of information in our local papers from FWP, so the word is getting out whether it is shoulder seasons, etc. The question is how many hunters really need more than one elk in a season? Everyone I hunt with can't believe that you can get a B tag! The invasive species letter was carried by the Western News in Libby.

Colter Comstock: The elk thing in Eureka has been the drama of the fall. Turkeys are also a big issue in the town of Eureka. Neil says the City of Eureka can come up with a management plan and FWP will be happy to assist with that.

Chuck Hunt: As an avid bow hunter, I appreciate the bow season. The last Flathead Wildlife meeting was a really good one. Leo Rosenthal gave a presentation regarding the lake trout netting at Swan Lake. Chuck gave many updates on FWI's accomplishments.

Mike Robertson: What is the late season shoulder season? Neil answers that it depends on the area. For the Angling sub-committee, we would still like some R1 waters managed for non trout species. How will Turkey regulations work?

Larry Lack: Re-capped existing comments from others then told the group about shoulder season information from R4 Graham Taylor.

NEXT MEETING IS MARCH 2ND. SEE YA THEN!